

Message Text

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ACTION TRSE-00

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 EB-07 AID-05 OMB-01 IO-10 XMB-02

CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 /043 W

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R 190950Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9704

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EFIN, EAID, TS

SUBJ: ANNUAL IMF/IBRD MEETING

REF: STATE 165594

1. COMPOSITION OF TUNISIAN DELEGATION TO SUBJECT MEETINGS NOT YET DETERMINED, BUT IT IS PROBABLE THAT MUSTAPHA ZAAOUNI, MINISTER IN CHARGE OF PLANNING, WILL HEAD DELEGATION, WHICH WILL ALSO INCLUDE RACHID SFAR, SEC GEN OF MIN FINANCE, AN OFFICIAL OF THE DIV OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION IN FON MIN, AND AN OFFICIAL OF CENTRAL BANK. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT GOVERNOR OF CENTRAL BANK, IN CAPACITY OF TUNISIAN GOVERNOR FOR IMF, WILL ATTEND, BUT NOT LIKELY.

2. WHILE TUNISIAN DELEGATION, ZAAOUNI IN PARTICULAR, WILL PROBABLY SEEK APPOINTMENTS WITH STATE, AID, AND TREASURY OFFICIALS DURING HIS VISIT TO WASHINGTON, IT IS UNLIKELY THAT HE WOULD SEEK BILATERAL MEETINGS WITH US DELEGATION TO IMF/IBRD MEETINGS. IF DIRECT BILATERAL CONTACT IS ESTABLISHED, ZAAOUNI MIGHT RAISE QUESTION OF AID LEVELS AND PREPARATIONS FOR THE JOINT COMMISSION MEETING NOW SCHEDULED FOR OCTOBER. ON LATTER, IT IS POSSIBLE QUESTIONS OF DOUBLE TAXATION TREATY AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR US-OWNED DINARS WILL HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED BY A GROUP OF EXPERTS IN WASHINGTON WEEK BEFORE IMF/IBRD MEETINGS, IN WHICH CASE ZAAOUNI MAY SEEK TO FOLLOW UP AT A HIGHER

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LEVEL.

3. US DELEGATION MIGHT KEEP IN MIND FOLLOWING TWO ISSUES WHICH ARE NOT STRICTLY GERMANE TO US/GOT BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS BUT COULD BE RAISED IF A MEETING IS HELD. VARIOUS MEMBERS DONOR GROUP IN TUNISIA HAVE COMMENTED ON NEED FOR OUTLINE OF FOURTH OR FIFTH PLAN PROJECTS FOR WHICH GOT SEEKS OUTSIDE CONCESSIONAL FINANCING. IN THIS CONTEXT, CLOSER GOT CONSULTATION WITH ALL DONORS IN PREPARATION FIFTH DEVELOPMENT PLAN WOULD BE HELPFUL. SECONDLY, GOT IS CURRENTLY ENGAGED IN AGRICULTURE CREDIT REVIEW WITH IBRD ENCOURAGEMENT. USG AND OTHER DONORS INVOLVED AG SECTOR MIGHT ENCOURAGE STEPPED UP EFFORT COMPLETE REVIEW.

4. BRIEFING PAPERS PREPARED FOR THE RECENT CONSULTATIVE GROUP MEETING ON TUNISIA AND THE INAUGURAL JOINT COMMISSION MEETING SHOULD SUPPLY SUFFICIENT BACKGROUND FOR THE US DELEGATION ON VIRTUALLY EVERY BILATERAL ISSUE OF SUBSTANCE. SEELYE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEETING DELEGATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 JUL 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: SmithRJ
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975TUNIS04404
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750250-0681
From: TUNIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750738/aaaabibq.tel
Line Count: 79
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION TRSE
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 STATE 165594
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: SmithRJ
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 AUG 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 AUG 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <05 DEC 2003 by SmithRJ>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ANNUAL IMF/IBRD MEETING
TAGS: EFIN, EAID, TS, IBRD, IMF, (ZAANOUNI, MUSTAPHA)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006